1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

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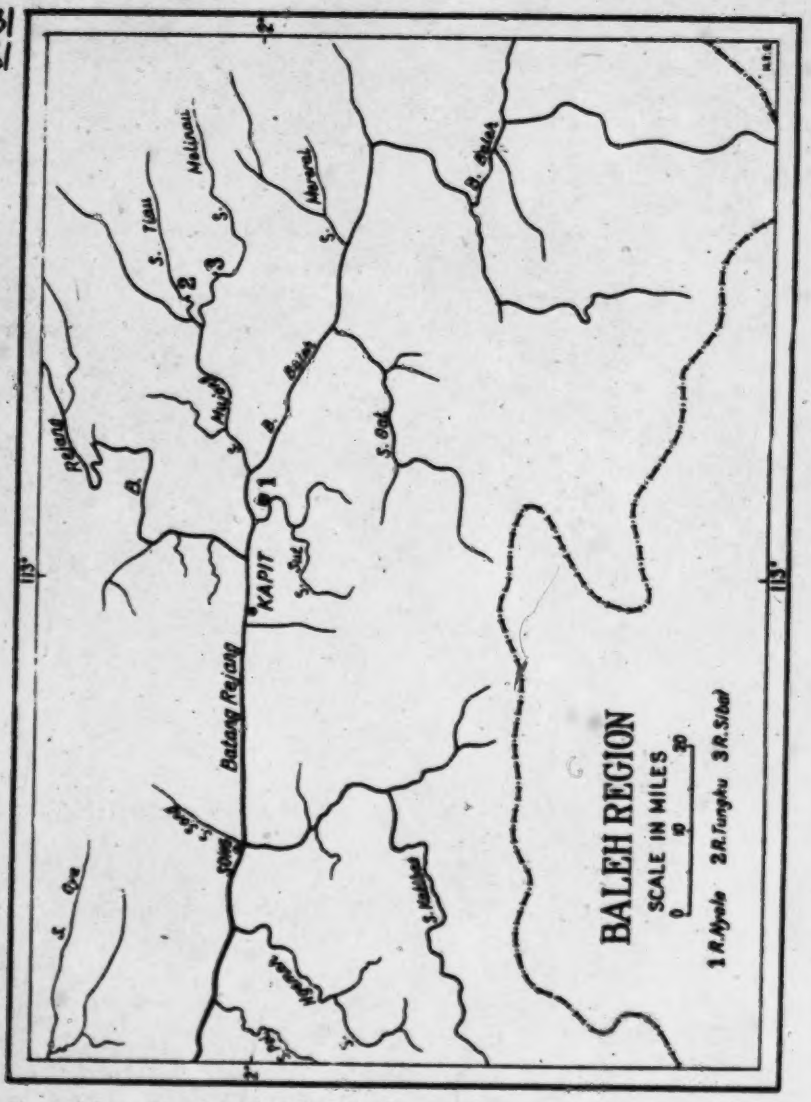

Sketch Map 1. Showing the Baleh Region and the Locations of the Three Long-Houses Rumah Nyala, Rumah Sibat and Rumah Tungku

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

as memorials of triumph, has degenerated, from its originally sufficiently barbarous intention, into a passion for the possession of these horrid trophies, no matter how obtained. Amongst the land Dyaks the custom still remains as it was probably at first instituted, and no wish for the possession of a head would tempt these people to take one unless it were that of their enemy with whom they were avowedly at war. These land Dyaks differ more decidedly in other particulars from those who frequent the sea, all of which shall be related in the chapter upon their customs and manners.

The sea Dyaks, or such as are in the constant habit of frequenting the ocean for the purposes of carrying off the heads of fishermen, or any other persons whom they may find in a situation not capable of defence, inhabit principally the countries lying in the interior of the great rivers Sarebas and Sakarran, with their numerous and large branches. Settlements of them, which, however, appear to differ in some measure, are also found on the Kenawit and the neighbouring branches of the river Rejang, and one tribe also belonging to this division has its chief settlement at Lundup, pronounced Lundoo in the Sarawak territory. As it is from this tribe that the following remarks are principally drawn, except where it is expressly stated to the contrary, I think it right to give the reader a just idea of its geographical position. This tribe, the name of which is Seboovoh, misprinted Sibnowan in Captain Keppel's book, came originally from the country

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
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situated about the sources of the western branch of the Batang Lupar river, in the direction of the lake Danau Malayu and the Pontianak river. They were expelled from thence by their enemies, and descending the Batang Lupar, established their villages on a small river named Sebooyoh, from which they are now designated. This river is situated a little to the westward of the mouth of the Batang Lupar, between it and the Sadong rivers. From this they carried on war with their old enemies of Sakarran with various success, but were finally compelled, about ten years before the new era of Sarawak, again to decamp farther westward, when they divided into three tribes, and settled in the villages they now occupy. That portion which followed the chief orang kaya of the tribe, and whose family has for many generations produced its chief, settled at Lundu, which has now become a beautiful fortified village, and from which the gallant old chief has frequently made successful expeditions against his hereditary enemies.

The river of Lundu is situated to the westward of the Santu-bong, or western entrance to the river of Sarawak: this river, which is not large, has its rise in the Sarawak territory and country occupied by the land Dyaks of Singhie. Another large village of the Sebooyoh Dyaks is established on a creek of the Sarawak river about a mile below the Malayan town; the creek is called Peduñgan, and the Dyaks are often designated as orang or Dyak Peduñgan—the men or

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

131 Dyaks of Peduñgan. The village established here is
361 well built, and contains about sixty families; it is not
[113] fortified in any way, though the Dyaks possess some small brass guns. The other divisions of the tribe, which are equally under the protection of the government of Sarawak, have villages on the Samarhand and Sadong rivers, but many little clusters of houses are to be found scattered about in the country near the mouths of the above-named streams, nominally belonging to the tribe, though not residing at any of the principal villages. The Dyaks of Lundu have been a pet tribe
721 of Mr. Brooke's, on account of the heroic gallantry displayed by them and their chief on many occasions of difficulty and danger. The conduct of the orang kaya, and his assistance to Mr. Brooke in the Seniawan war, are fully detailed in the Hon. Captain Keppel's work, whom they also accompanied in his expeditions against Sakarran and Sarebas, which are their favourite places of attack, they being always anxious to revenge themselves on these people, who have caused them so much loss and trouble during their residence in their former villages.

133 The country occupied by the sea Dyaks on the great rivers is generally flat towards the sea, but more undulating in the interior. It is covered in many parts
137 with dense forests, and the soil is rich and productive,
134 so that, when peaceably disposed, they are large exporters of rice, and all kinds of fruits are abundant
000 and very cheap in their districts. As far as is yet

6: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951) 1958 OC6 Iban OC6

THE FAMILY SYSTEM OF THE IBAN OF BORNEO

By J. D. FREEMAN

INTRODUCTION

The Iban[1]—with whose family system this essay is concerned—are a people of western Borneo. They are to be found, for the most part, among the remote, jungle-covered ranges of the undeveloped interior zone of Sarawak, and also in certain of the inaccessible headwaters of the great Kapuas river, in what is now Kalimantan or Indonesian Borneo.

In the judgement of A. C. Haddon, the Iban are Oceanic Mongols, and they belong to an ethnic stock which he has termed Proto-Malay (Haddon and Start 1936: 1). In brief, they are a brachycephalic people (average C.I. 83), of short stature (average height of males, 5 ft. 2½ in.), with lank, black hair, cinnamon coloured skins, and typically Mongoloid features.

Iban culture is also fundamentally proto-Malayan in type. In particular, the Iban language has many close affinities with Malay, and Howell, a leading authority, classes Iban as 'a dialect of the wide spreading Malay language'. The Iban language has not, however, been influenced by Arabic; nor have Iban culture and social institutions been appreciably affected by Islam.

In Sarawak today, the Iban are the predominant element in a highly heterogeneous population. The total population of Sarawak as disclosed by the census of 1947 was 546,385, and of this number 190,326 (or 34·8 %) were Iban. Sarawak, like so many of the other countries of south-east Asia, has a plural society. Along the coast, among the deltaic swamps and in the low-lying country bordering the tidal reaches of the rivers, one finds the main centres of Malay, Chinese and Melanau settlement. Further inland, amid steep and tangled ranges drained by swift-flowing streams and rivers, live the indigenous hill peoples: the Land Dayaks, the Iban, the Kayan, the Kenyah, the Kajang and others, all of them with subsistence economies based on the shifting cultivation of dry rice.

In particular, this essay is concerned with the Ulu Ai Iban of the Baleh river of the Third Division of Sarawak. The Baleh enters the great Rejang river, from the west, at a point about 170 river miles from the sea, and along its banks and those of its numerous tributaries (the Sut, Mujong, Gat and Merirai being the most important of them), there are scattered some 133 Iban communities with a total population of about 11,500. Almost all of these

6: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951) 1958 OC6 Iban OC6

J. D. FREEMAN

people are the descendants of migrants from the interior of the Second Division of Sarawak, and especially from the headwaters of the Batang Lupar. Travelling chiefly by way of the Katibas and Ngemah rivers, the first of these migrants reached the primeval forests of the Baleh in the early 1880's, but it was not until about forty years later, following serious conflict with the Brooke Government, that permanent Iban settlement was achieved [2]. Today the Baleh is an exclusively Iban area.

During the years—from 1949 to 1951—when my field research was undertaken [3], the Iban of the Baleh region were still little touched by the outside world. Their men, with long hair and bodies profusely tattooed, and their women, clad in ikat skirts of their own weaving, were all still pagan and pre-literate; and throughout the whole Baleh region, Iban culture—in all its extraordinary richness—was still a flourishing reality. In this essay then, we shall be concerned with the traditional ways of the Iban, ways which—because of the tolerant policies of the White Rajahs of Sarawak—have survived unscathed into the modern world.

THE IBAN LONG-HOUSE

All of the Iban of the Baleh region still live in long-houses. Architecturally there is nothing very remarkable about an Iban long-house, but many of them, out of sheer length, make an impressive spectacle. Rumah Tungku, for example, one of the long-houses selected for detailed discussion in this essay, extends in an uninterrupted line for more than a sixth of a mile. Standing on an elevated terrace, well beyond the reach of flood waters, and lifted high on score upon score of hardwood piles, it stretches—as do all Iban long-houses—along the bank of a river. Here and there, entry ladders of notched logs lead up like gangways to the *tanju*, an open platform that runs the entire length of the spindly structure and gives access to the public gallery and the family apartments beyond. Over both gallery and apartments a low-pitched roof of wooden shingles forms an unbroken expanse. At first glance the whole sprawling building seems like some huge barracks or pavilion.

Few long-houses have the dimensions of Rumah Tungku (sixty to a hundred yards is more common a length), but, casually regarded, all Iban long-houses do have the appearance of being compact architectural units, and this appearance has led some writers (Baring-Gould and Bampfylde 1909: 27) to the supposition that the long-house is therefore the outcome of some kind of communal or group organization and ownership. For the Iban, however, this supposition is very far from the truth.

Although the platform (*tanju*) and the gallery (*ruai*) of a long-house do extend without interruption throughout its entire length, an Iban long-house is, in fact, made up of a series of independently owned apartments, and

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

used to be a little village of the Seru near my house in Kalaka, where some forty of them lived in a long house, similar to that built by the Dyaks. The men wore the Dyak dress, but the women were dressed like the Malays, and wore a long petticoat reaching to the ankles (*sarong*), and a long jacket (*kabayah*). They planted paddy, but did not depend entirely on this for their livelihood. The men were great hunters, and would salt and sell the wild pig they killed. They were a very secluded people, and kept very much to themselves. They were not Mohammedans, and did not seem to have any of the religious rites peculiar to the Dyaks. They told me they believed in a good Spirit and a bad one, but their religious ideas were very vague.

Besides the tribes already mentioned, there are two distinct races of Dyaks in Borneo—the Sea Dyaks and the Land Dyaks. The former live by the sea and on the banks of the rivers, though many of them may be found far inland. The Land Dyaks inhabit the interior of the country, and are not so numerous or energetic as the Sea Dyaks. The language and traditions of these two divisions of the Dyak race are quite distinct.

The Dyaks spoken of in this work are the Sea Dyaks. Their home is in Sarawak—the country governed by Rajah Brooke—though they often travel far afield, and they are to be found in large numbers on the banks of the rivers of Sarawak—the Batang, Lupar, Saribas, Krian, and Rejang.

The Dyak is of rather greater stature than that of the Malay, though he is considerably shorter than the average European. The men are well-proportioned, but slightly built. Their form suggests activity, speed, and endurance rather than great strength, and these are the quali-

17:Bedford D-5 (1958) 1959 OC6 Iban OC6

Sea Dayak Diet: A Longhouse Survey

by

P. W. BEDFORD, B.SC., M.B., CH.B.

During the last two and a half years I have carried out several tours of Sea Dayak areas in the Second Division visiting three or four houses each day. It was soon realised that such tours furnished only very superficial information regarding the general level of health and nutrition of these people and the prevalence of disease from which they suffer. The present study was undertaken to enquire into these questions more closely.

Rumah Bujak at Nanga Pruan was chosen for the study. The reasons for this were its proximity to Simanggang and the fact that this house is fortunate in having a very active, enterprising headman so that willing co-operation from the people of the longhouse was to be expected throughout the period of study.

From the 2nd February to the 29th November, 1958, the longhouse was visited every Saturday or Sunday by a team usually comprising the Divisional Medical Officer, a hospital assistant, laboratory technician, one or more hospital attendants and one or more trained *ulu* dressers. Sick people were examined each week, either treated on the spot or sent to Simanggang for outpatient or inpatient treatment as indicated. In addition the investigations to be described below were carried out during these weekly visits.

Rumah Bujak, Pruan

Before presenting the results of the study a brief description will be given of the longhouse and the way of life of the people who live in it.

The people of Rumah Bujak come originally from Sungai Pinggai on the Undup River. The Undup is a moderately large left branch of the Batang Lupar, the mouth of which is about twenty minutes' journey by outboard upriver from Simanggang. Sungai Pinggai is a further three hours' journey up the Undup by outboard.

18:Sutlive E,M-5 (1957-1971) 1973 OC6 Iban OC6 Sibu

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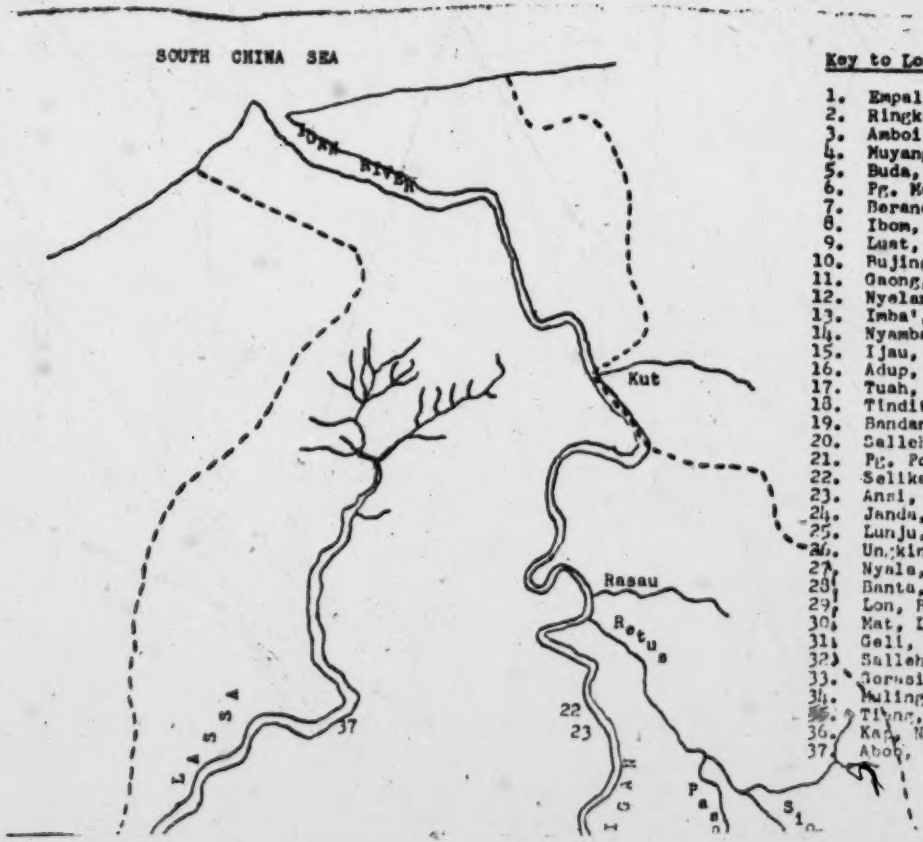

Key to Longhouse Numbers 10

1. Empaling, Assan
2. Ringkai, Lubok Guchi
3. Amboi, Assan Nunggang
4. Muyang, Batu Wong
5. Buda, Naman
6. Pg. Meringgai, Durin
7. Berandah, Durin
8. Ibom, Durin
9. Luat, Durin
10. Bujing, Durin
11. Gaong, Sengan
12. Nyelang, Salim
13. Imba', Salim
14. Nyambang, Salim
15. Ijau, Oya Road
16. Adup, Oya Road
17. Tuah, Oya Road
18. Tindit, Oya Road
19. Bandang, Pasai Bon
20. Salleh, Pasai Bon
21. Pg. Poh, Pasai
22. Selikau, Tutus
23. Ansi, Tutus
24. Janda, Batu Burak
25. Lunju, Penasu'
26. Ungking, Penasu'
27. Nyala, Aup
28. Banta, Aup
29. Lon, Bidut
30. Mat, Langgup
31. Geli, Bawang Assan
32. Salleh, Bawang Assan
33. Gorasi, Loba'an
34. Muling, Lengan
35. Tiong, Melangan
36. Kap, Nanga Lassa
37. Abob, Lassa

18:Sutlive E,M-5 (1957-1971) 1973 OC6 Iban OC6
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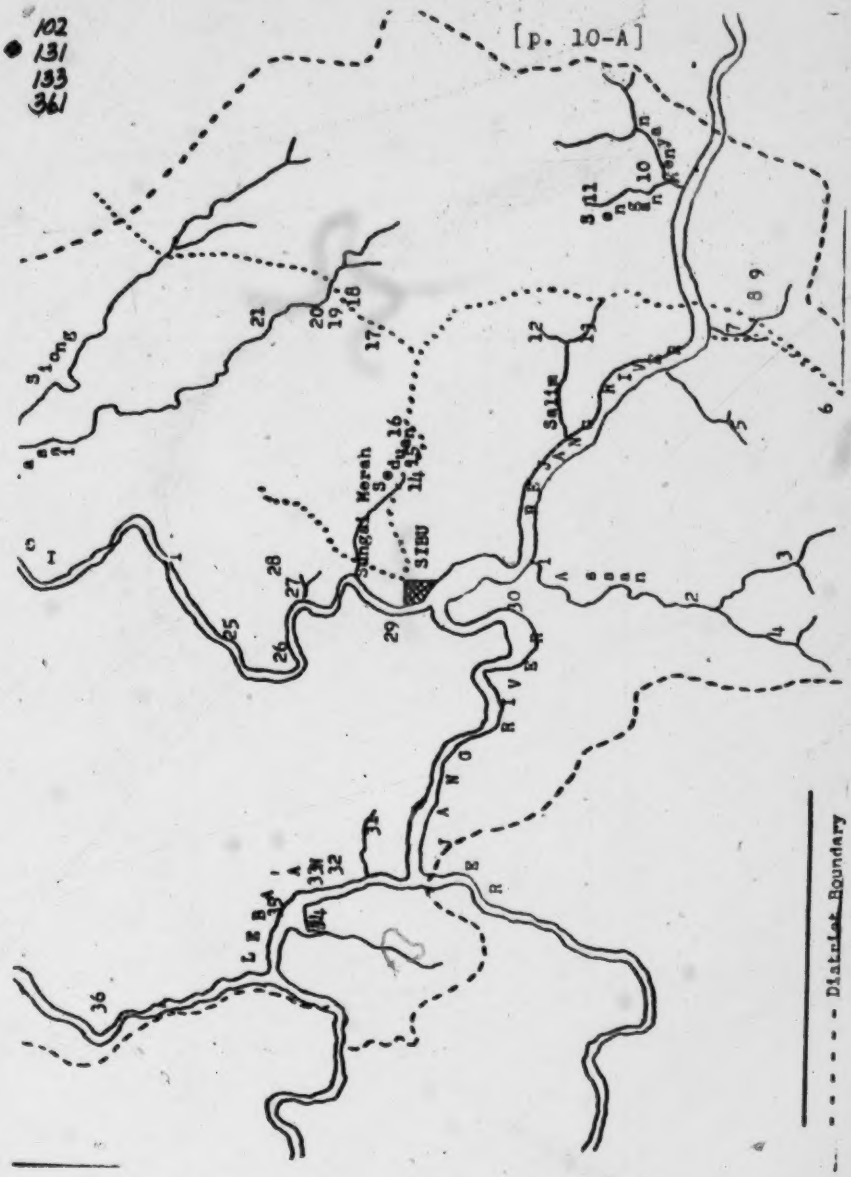

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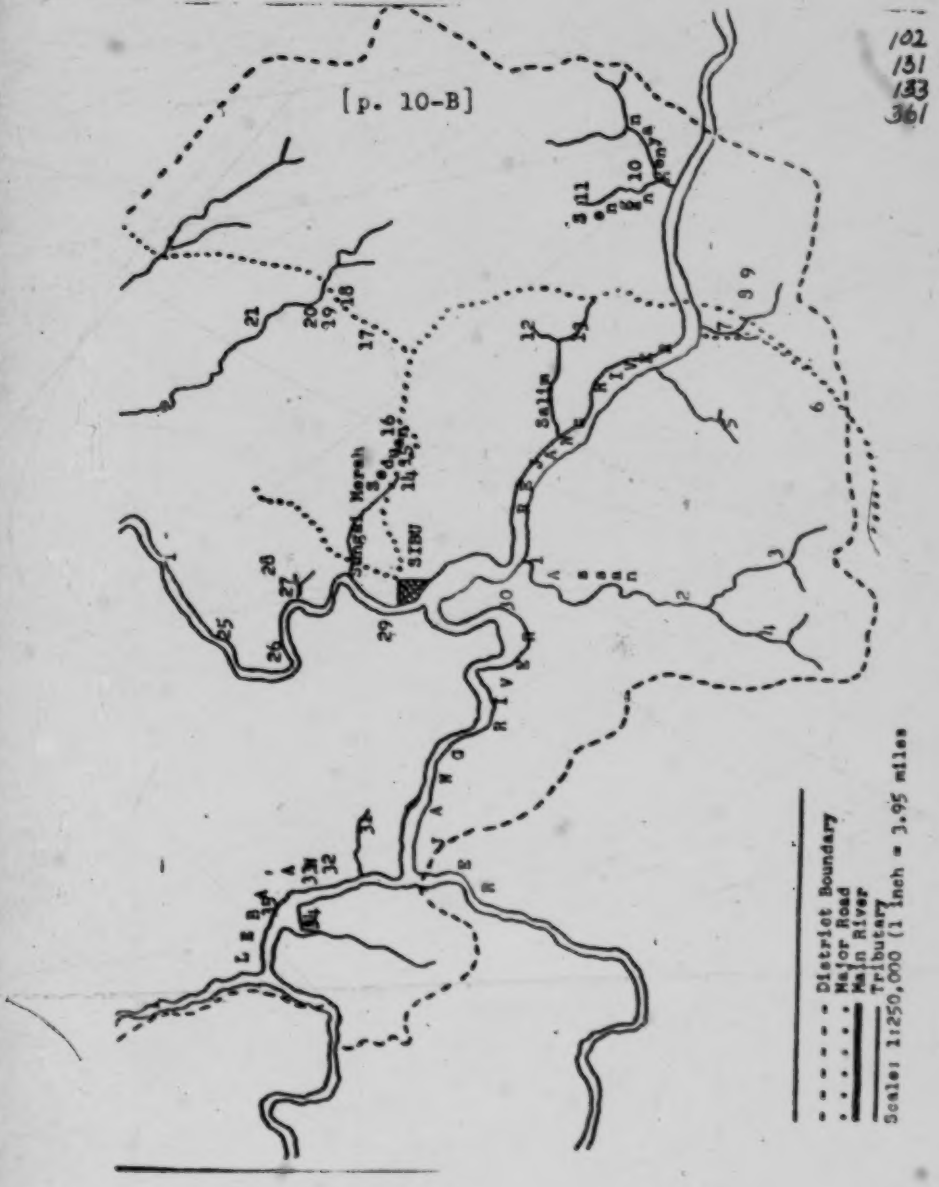
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